

Basic Water Conservation

Tips for the Home

- Look for leaks in shower, sinks, and especially toilets. Toilet leaks can be detected by adding a few drops of food coloring to water in the tank. If the colored water appears in the bowl, the toilet is leaking. Install new flappers or washers to replace old, worn ones, and change faucet heads to include aerators and other low-flow technologies.
- Take reasonable length showers instead of baths. Baths use 2 to 3 times as much water as showers. Install a low-flow showerhead for additional savings.
- Turn off running water while shaving or brushing your teeth.
- Use washing machines and dishwashers only when they are fully loaded. Skip any non-essential rinse cycles, and use the proper water level or load size selection on the washing machine. If purchasing new machines, look for water efficiency as an important feature, including most Energy Star rated models, which can cut water use substantially.
- Limit pre-washing or scrubbing of dishes, or let dishes soak in a full sink rather than using a continuous flow of water. Compost any scraps instead of washing/grinding them in a sink disposal.
- If a dishwasher is not available, use a dishpan or plug the sink for washing and rinsing dishes. Once a day only!
- Refrigerate tap water to avoid running the faucet for a long period to get cold water.

Tips for Outside

- Utilize native plants and shrubs rather than exotics, which tend to not be drought resistant and therefore demand more water.
- Water your garden during the coolest part of the day. Use soaker/irrigation hoses rather than sprinklers to avoid un-necessary loss of water through evaporation.
- Use mulch around shrubs and garden plants to reduce evaporation from the soil surface and cut down on weed growth.
- Inspect your hose connections and bibs for leaks to make sure no water is being lost unnecessarily.

- Use a broom or blower, not a hose, to clean driveways, steps and sidewalks.
- When washing vehicles or equipment, remember to turn off the hose during scrubbing; use water sparingly during the wash-down.
- When mowing the yard, keep the mower blade at one of the higher settings. Lawns tolerate heat and drought better when kept high; “scalping” a yard reduces its ability to withstand dry conditions.
- Direct downspouts, gutters and air conditioner drips toward shrubbery or trees, if possible; collect rainwater in a large buckets or cisterns for other outside uses.
- Cover pools and spas to reduce evaporation when not in use.
- Insulate your pipes for cold winter weather! Busted pipes can cause the loss of a large amount of water, and also can cost a lot of money to repair.